

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 01746 241500Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USSS-00 /026 W
-----241506 028529 /41

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 74

S E C R E T BOGOTA 01746

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, ASEC, CASC, CO
SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF PC VOLUNTEER: SITREP 14

1. PC DIRECTOR SORZANO TALKED TO JAIME ESPINOSA, AN
INDERENA WARDEN AT THE MACARENA NATIONAL PARK WHO SHARED
THE INDERENA CABIN WITH RICHARD STARR.

2. MR. ESPINOSA RELATED IN DETAIL THE EVENTS LEADING
TO THE ABDUCTION OF RICHARD STARR. HIS STORY CORRESPONDS
CLOSELY TO THE OTHER VERSIONS WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY
HEARD. IN PARTICULAR HE STATED THAT:

A. THE GUERRILLAS DID NOT COME TO LA MACARENA
LOOKING FOR RICHARD STARR OR ANY OF THE OTHER PCVS THAT
HAD BEEN IN THE REGION FOR SOME TIME. FARC CAME LOOKING
FOR FOUR INDIVIDUALS (A SHOP OWNER, THE MANAGER OF THE
CAJA AGRARIA, ANOTHER PERSON WHOSE FUNCTION OR POSITION
IS NOT CLEAR TO US AND FOR MR. ESPINOSA HIMSELF). NOT
FINDING ANY OF THESE FOUR PERSONS AND HAVING FOUND
STARR BY CHANCE, THEY DECIDED TO TAKE THE VOLUNTEER.

B. MR. ESPINOSA ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE FARC
GUERRILLAS DID NOT IN ANY WAY PHYSICALLY HARM STARR.
ON THE CONTRARY, THE GUERRILLAS POLITELY ASKED

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STARR TO DRESS, TO PACK HIS GEAR AND EVEN OFFERED TO
CARRY HIS BACKPACK FOR HIM. MR. ESPINOSA IS OF THE
OPINION THAT SINCE FARC IS SEEKING PUBLIC SUPPORT THAT
THEY WILL NOT HARM STARR. ESPINOSA ALSO SAID THAT
SINCE THERE IS A WIDESPREAD CONVICTION THAT FARC IS
MOVING TOWARDS THE HUILA REGION HE THINKS THAT THE GUERRILLAS ARE
EITHER HEADING IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION OR STILL AROUND

LA MACARENA.

3. PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR ALSO LEARNED FROM ESPINOSA THAT GUERRILLAS HAS LOOKED AND ASKED FOR A SPECIAL OVER-AND-UNDER SHOTGUN RIFLE COMBINATION WEAPON WITH TELESCOPIC SIGHTS THAT ANOTHER PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER POSSESSED AND USED IN CONNECTION WITH HIS SCIENTIFIC WORK INVOLVING WILDLIFE. THUS, GUERRILLAS CLEARLY HAD SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT PERSONNEL AT THE SITE OF THE ATTACK AND THEY APPARENTLY ALSO KNEW THAT THE VOLUNTEER WHO HAD THIS WEAPON WAS NOT IN THE CAMP BECAUSE THEY DID NOT TRY TO FIND THE VOLUNTEER HIMSELF JUST THE GUN THAT THEY APPARENTLY BELIEVED HE LEFT BEHIND.
SANCHEZ

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TAGS: PINS, ASEC, CASC, CO, PC, (STARR, RICHARD CHARLES)
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